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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PRAGUE 000717

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TAGS: [EUN](#) [KPAL](#) [PREL](#) [XG](#) [IS](#) [AF](#) [EZ](#) [ETTC](#) [PARM](#) [PGOV](#)
SOCI, CU, MD, RS, SR, SU, XF, XH, XM, XW, ZL, XA
SUBJECT: CZECHS ON JUNE 18-19 GAERC

REF: A. STATE 80034

[1](#)B. PRAGUE 700

Classified By: Acting Political-Economic Counselor
Karen Choe for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: At the upcoming GAERC, the Czechs expect the EU will not reach consensus on Cuba and that the June measures will remain in place. The Czech Republic supports the Ahtisaari plan for Kosovo and will seek solutions to the Iranian nuclear program issue. The GOCR is preparing to offer financial support for peacekeeping in Sudan. The Czechs are concerned that the Moldovan government is sending mixed messages to the EU as it negotiates with Russia. The Czech Government agrees that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit should not be allowed to endanger the Manas airfield. End summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Poloff met with Director of the CFSP Department Vaclav Balek to discuss the June 18-19 GAERC.

CUBA:

[1](#)3. (C) Balek predicted that after the recent spate of maneuvering, the June Measures will remain in place because the EU would be unable to reach a common position. He said the true level of opposition to a warming of relations with Cuba had initially been misunderstood because all EU Chiefs of Mission in Havana except for the Czech had joined together to support the lifting of the June measures. Balek said that, in taking this step, not all had followed their capitals, preferences. Balek said the Poles in particular were caught completely by surprise when informed by other EU members that their emissary in Havana supports greater engagement.

EUROPEAN NEIGHBORHOOD POLICY:

[1](#)4. (C) The Czechs do not expect there to be much substantive discussion on ENP during the GAERC. Balek said the real issue at hand is where the EU should focus its resources, with divisions on whether the EU should focus on countries to the east or to the south.

CENTRAL ASIA:

[1](#)5. (C) As reported in Ref B, the Czechs support the U.S. position on access to Manas Air Base and intend to share their opinion with members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

KOSOVO:

¶6. (C) Balek said the EU, when discussing the Balkans, is focused almost exclusively on Serbia and Kosovo. He believes that Slovakia's objections to the Ahtisaari plan opened the door for Spain and Greece to raise their own concerns. Balek said that Slovak FM Kubis privately bemoans his own government's position on Kosovo, expressing that Slovakia's intransigence is the result of a direct order from PM Fico. The issue of unity in the face of Russia's opportunism is an explicit part of the EU's discussions on Kosovo, and constitutes one of the strongest arguments for unity behind the Ahtisaari plan. Balek fears that, without a UNSCR, the EU may fail to deliver a security force to stabilize Kosovo at a time when UNMIK is losing its grip. International divisions will inevitably lead to increased tension on the ground. He added that the Czechs fear, if a UNSCR is not forthcoming, unilateral recognition by some states could lead to complete disintegration of EU policy and engagement on Kosovo.

MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS/EU-ARAB LEAGUE:

¶7. (C) Balek believes the extremely fluid situation in Gaza will prevent the EU from producing more than a general statement of EU principles in relation to the rapidly developing events. Anything more detailed could be out of date within hours.

¶8. (C) Balek said the Arab League, supported by Malta, continues to push for a high level dialogue with the EU. The Czech Republic opposes a meeting at anything higher than the expert level, preferring higher-level interaction to take place under existing structures that include Israel.

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IRAN:

¶9. (C) The Czechs expect EU ministers will brainstorm about Iran over lunch. The Czechs believe a two-track approach would be best, combining a hard line on nuclear activities with engagement to encourage Iran to play a more constructive role in the region, particularly Lebanon, Syria, and Afghanistan.

SUDAN:

¶10. (C) There has been little development of Czech policy on Darfur. The GOCR believes the only way out involves hybrid forces and is considering financial rather than personnel support. The amount has not yet been determined.

MOLDOVA

¶11. (C) The Czechs believe a major obstacle to progress is the Chisinau government itself, which is sending mixed messages to Europe as it negotiates with Russia. Balek believes the potential for significant EU involvement is limited because of the issues comparatively low priority in EU capitals. He also expressed concern that ideas for any peacekeeping force with a large Russian element would be pointless, because this would not be a significant step away from the existing problematic arrangements.

GRABER